Barrio Libre (Barrio Histórico)
Represented by a block
Bounded by West Kennedy St., South
Convent Ave., West 17th St., and
South Meyer Ave.
Tucson
Pima County
Arizona

HABS No. AZ-73

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20243

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

BARRIO LIBRE (Barrio Histórico) AZ-73

PART I. PHYSICAL SETTING OF THE BARRIO LIBRE

Tucson's Barrio Libre historic district encompasses twelve blocks located to the south of the present downtown area. The early commercial zone occupied much the same portion of downtown Tucson as does today's business district, and the Barrio Libre area then, as now, was primarily residential. Most of the early commercial structures have been destroyed, along with many of the Barrio's residential buildings, to make room for high-rises and other constituents of a modern city. The remaining residential area, bounded by Stone and Main avenues on the east and west, and by 14th and 18th streets on the north and south, has been designated by the city as an historic district and placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Adobe is the primary construction material, with brick and frame structures forming only a small percentage of the buildings. Residences are often attached row houses; they are set flush with the sidewalks, and have few window and door openings, for the most part. The rows of adobes set on odd-size parcels of land, and the non-uniform block sizes, create a unique streetscape. A visitor to Tucson in the late 1880s gave this impression of the Barrio:

> . . . the division known as the Barrio Libre, with its tortuous lanes and alleys, its uninviting adobes, with their cool, roomy court yards in the interior, its motley population of Mexicans and Indians, and the mellifluous chatter of la lengua Castellana, looks like a bit of old Mexico transplanted to the Northern Republic. (Hamilton, p. 66.)

The Barrio has historically been a community of Spanish-speaking citizens, most of whom have rented their dwellings from absentee landlords. Rents have remained fairly low, and many of the structures have been allowed to deteriorate. With the creation of the historic district, a number of artists and artisans have moved into the area, opening small shops and studios. Several of the buildings have been rehabilitated, and the Barrio is becoming an "avant-garde" place to live and work.

Although the historic name of this area is the Barrio Libre, it is often called the Barrio Histórico since the time it was designated an historic district, and it is known to many of its residents also as the "Varrio Viejo." There are thirteen or fourteen different barrios existing in Tucson, two of which--El Hoyo and El Membrillo--border on the Barrio Libre. The literal translation of barrio is "neighborhood," but the word means more than that. To its residents, it has the connotation of a way of life, a cultural spirit, and a sense of place.

PART II. HISTORICAL CONTEXT--DEVELOPMENT OF TUCSON

The first European to mention the Tucson area was a Spanish missionary by the name of Father Eusebio Fancisco Kino, who noted an Indian settlement in the vicinity of Tucson on his way to the Gila River in 1694. An Indian ranchería had probably existed in this area from about A.D. 800 (Chronology, p. 1). Spanish missionaries traveled throughout the Southwest establishing missions in their efforts to civilize and Christianize the Indians. Revolts by the local Pima Indian tribes and the necessity of guarding the route to California led to the establishment of a presidio south of Tucson, at Tubac, in 1752. Tubac was the northernmost Spanish fort until 1770, when the Spanish initiated construction of a presidio in the vicinity of what is now the Tucson Museum of Art complex in downtown Tucson. The Spanish garrison abandoned Tubac in 1886, occupying Tucson, and lending protection from the marauding Apaches to the surrounding farmers, missionaries, and peaceful Indians (Around and Roundabout Tucson, p. 13; Cosulich, p. 50).

The presidio population was never large. Reports on the number of Spanish soldiers garrisoned there range from 20 to 100, and general accounts place the total population at 300 to 400 between the years 1800 and 1840. A census taken in 1820 by Father Antonio Arriquibar, Military Chaplain of the presidio, listed the names of 395 residents of Tucson (Tucson Information Book, AHS). Although Tucson shifted from Spanish to Mexican control with Mexico's independence in 1821, daily life altered little in the presidio. The settlement remained essentially a military community of soldiers and their families. Ranchers and miners from the surrounding area came to the presidio for supplies and protection, but the population remained small until the Americans began to trickle in during the 1850s (Lockwood, Old Pueblo, p. 38; Saarinen manuscript, Chap.4).

It was the Mormon Battalion that first raised the American flag in Tucson in December 1846, but the United States did not formally acquire the territory until the Gadsden Purchase was effected in 1854. In 1856, Mexican troops withdrew from the presidio, and American soldiers took possession of the fort. Although several enterprising Anglos had already found their way to Tucson and settled there prior to the Gadsden Purchase, large numbers did not begin to arrive until after 1856 (Chronology, p. 5; Lockwood, Old Pueblo, p. 34). The San Diego Herald described Tucson in 1855:

> . . . on a small eminence near the rivulet, appears the town of Tuxon (sic), the largest one in the new acquisition, formerly a mere presidio; but discharged soldiers and other citizens have built their little huts around it until it has grown to be a place of some 600 to 700 inhabitants . . . . A few Americans and foreigners have been settled there for some time, carrying on some business, and their number will doubtless be increased by this year's immigration from Texas. (San Diego Herald, August 11, 1855, from Cosulich, p. 68.)

The Butterfield Overland Stage Company began operating between St. Louis and San Francisco in 1858, with stops in El Paso, Tucson, and Yuma, thereby diminishing the effects of Tucson's isolated location by bringing regular mail

and supply deliveries. It also brought a stream of engineers, teachers, ministers, doctors, investors, and other specialists needed to develop the frontier (M. S. T. & T. Co.; Saarinen manuscript, Chap. 9).

Tucson's 1860 census showed a growth in population to nearly 1,000 inhabitants, but the town still presented a rather shabby appearance. A letter published in the Daily Alta Californian gives this impression:

> Near Tucson we passed some small vineyards and peach trees, also fields of grain and some gardens. The town is dilapidated--spread over a large surface, with heaps of dried mud in the streets. The houses have sluiceways coursing down their sides, an evidence that it rains here sometimes; and the people--I have only got a glimpse of them, I had seen them before and the officers of justice would be anxious to see them again . . . they drink whiskey and deal monte . . . and they always fear strangers . . . (Daily Alta Californian, July 1, 1860, from Cosulich, pp. 70-71.)

The opening of the Civil War in 1861 caused troops to be withdrawn from Tucson to fight in the east, leaving the town open to attacks from the Apaches. Many of the prominent Anglo settlers were Southern sympathizers and a great celebration took place when Confederate troops occupied the town in February 1862. The joy was short-lived, as Union troops entered in May 1862 and declared martial law. While under the administration of the Union Army, the first survey of Tucson was commissioned, resulting in the Fergusson map and instructions to William S. Oury to record property titles. Most of the settlement at this time surrounded the site of the old presidio.

The Fergusson map does not extend as far south as the Barrio district, and the Oury property recordings are essentially in the area included on the Fergusson map. Inexact boundary descriptions and omission of properties in the property record book cause difficulty in ascertaining if any of the recorded lots were located in the Barrio (Fergusson map, Oury Property Record Book).

From 1855-1863 Arizona had been a part of Doña Ana County in New Mexico Territory. In 1863 Arizona became a separate territory with its capital at Prescott. Tucson had become the central point for distribution of supplies from the east to the west coast. The next year, 1864, Tucson became an incorporated town by proclamation of the Territorial Governor, and town officials were appointed. Tucson's population had grown during the war to approximately 1,500 citizens, but the community still presented a sorry aspect (Chronology, p. 6; Lockwood, Old Pueblo, p. 39). The wife of a Confederate officer made this entry in her diary in 1865:

> At last we have drifted into port, but alas! I look around me with a sinking heart and wonder if this can be the goal we have been striving so hard to reach. Excepting the wretched, squalid town of Janos in Mexico,..... I do not remember of ever having seen a less inviting, less promising prospect for a home. Tucson is certainly the most forlorn, dreary, desolate, God forsaken spot of earth ever trodden by the foot of a white man. The low, mud hovels are constructed regardless of comfort or convenience, there are

> but one or two glass windows in the town and not a single board floor. Narrow, crooked, filthy streets, very few white washed walls." (Diary of Mrs. Granville Oury, notation of Nov. 11, 1865. In Cosulich, pp. 72-73.)

The military garrison had abandoned its downtown camp in 1864, but a new fort was built and occupied a few miles to the northeast in 1867. Streets had already been cut through the old presidio walls, and adobe bricks taken from the wall used in construction of the town (About and Roundabout, pp. 13-14; Lockwood, Old Pueblo, p. 35). A minor building boom occurred in Tucson in 1866 as several mercantile firms had transported large stocks of goods to the town, and more substantial houses began to be constructed (Purcell, p. 45).

Tucson had displaced Prescott as the territorial capital in 1867 and four years later was incorporated as a village by the Pima County Board of Supervisors (Chronology, pp. 6-7). The new town officials immediately set about to acquire a townsite patent for Tucson from the United States government. They submitted an application for 1,280 acres, the maximum allowed, in June 1871. Although they had not yet received title to the land, the village officials contracted S. W. Foreman to survey tbe townsite in March 1872, and the local newspaper advertised procedures for townspeople to acquire vacant lots. The Recorder proceeded to record property deeds that same year, even though the actual townsite patent was not approved until 1874. Property titles were in a chaotic state because the Mexicans had removed all of the property records when they withdrew in 1856. Federal laws required a continuous chain of title dating back to the Spanish or Mexican grant, a difficult task for Tucson's citizens in 1872. For the most part, if a person could prove that he or she had "taken up and improved" a piece of property and could verbally state its changes of ownership as far back as possible, he or she was awarded title (Pederson).

Tucson was finally growing into a full-fledged town. A traveler described it thus in 1877:

> Tucson had two hotels, a county court-house and jail, fifteen general stores, a branch United States depository, two breweries, six attorneys, five physicians, one news depot, ten saloons, two milliners, two flouring mills, three barbers, four boot and shoe stores, four feed and livery stables, a public schoolhouse and a about three hundred pupils, a Catholic school under the charge of the Sisters of St. Joseph, with about two hundred pupils, one photographic gallery, two jewelers, several small establishments, and one newspaper . . . (Hodge, p. 154).

The city functioned without a central water system until 1882. Prior to that time the city's water needs were met by use of private wells and "EL Ojito Spring", a natural artesian well on South Main Avenue. Residents were required to buy ration tickets to obtain water at the Spring (Cosulicb papers, Power).

The 1870 population of 3,000 had more than doubled to 7,000 by 1880. Still, most of the population had Spanish surnames. The census schedules for 1860, 1864, and 1870 show that over 70 percent of the population was of Hispanic origin. And, until 1880, nearly two-thirds of all of the Tucson inhabitants were male. By 1890 this was more evenly distributed between 54 percent males and 46 percent females. Nevertheless, Anglo women were rarely found in Tucson until the 1880s. The 1860 census lists only eight Anglo women and the 1870 census only 37, some of whom were nuns. Intermarriage between Anglo men and Mexican women that linked the two communities and forged lasting personal and business ties. Between 1863 and 1880 the Mexican and Anglo upper classes were nearly indistinguishable (Tucson Information Book; Saarinen manuscript, Chap. 1; Officer).

The 1880s ushered in new developments with the coming of the railroad. An article in the Arizona Daily Star of 1879 gives a good description of the town and prefaces the changes that would occur within a few short years:

> Tucson is, beyond all question, the city of Arizona. It has a population of about eight thousand, two-thirds of which is Mexican. A number of extensive business houses are located in Tucson that do a large lucrative trade, especially with the state of Sonora, Mexico. Now that it is settled that the railroad will pass within the city limits, the probabilities are that a new town will spring up in the immediate vicinity of the company's buildings, one more pleasing than now exist. It will be discovered that a frame building, properly constructed, can be made as cool and comfortable as one of brick or adobe, and when this is known we may look for something possessing more claims to architectural beauty than can now be found in that locality. Tucson will be the great centre of supplies for numerous mining districts of southern Arizona, and it is destined to become a place of great importance, that too in a very short time. (Arizona Daily Star, July 17, 1879, p. 1.)

The first train over the Southern Pacific tracks reached Tucson on March 20, 1880 (Chronology, p. 8). The arrival of the railroad signaled the end of close trading relations with northern Mexico and set off a minor depression as many businesses and contacts between north and south were disrupted. Commercial relations shifted to an east-west focus, and during the 1880s the face of Tucson was changed. The trains were able to make regular deliveries of large quantities of building supplies; Anglo inhabitants used the imported brick and timber to build residences similar to those they were accustomed to in the east. There was a dwindling reliance on adobe construction, which had originally stemmed from the necessity of using native materials, and an Indian and Spanish tradition of adobe building adapted to the desert climate and way of life. Victorian brick and frame buildings with pitched roofs and many windows came to be constructed alongside the flat-roofed, mud dwellings. Many of the adobe dwellings were anglicized by adding a hipped or gabled roof or modifying the windows. Certain concessions had to be made to adapt the new construction types to the desert climate—roof vents permitted air to pass through the attic; porches and roof overhangs shaded the windows; and open sleeping

Porches in the back allowed some relief from the hot summer nights (Deitch, pp. 30, 43-44). Building loans, made after the incorporation of the Tucson Building and Loan Association in 1888, produced scores of new homes throughout the town (Hughes).

The 1880s brought more "firsts" to Tucson. In 1881 the town installed its first telephone exchange and was linked to all east and west points by telegraph. Gas street lights were installed in 1882, and the community's first waterworks system began service to its citizens. The territorial legislature voted in 1885 to locate the University of Arizona in Tucson, and ground was broken for the first building two years later (Chronology, pp. 8-9).

A soldier traveling through Tucson in the 1880s noted the differences:

> Tucson had changed the most appreciably of any town in the Southwest; American energy and American dapital had effected a wonderful transformation: the old garrison was gone; the railroad had arrived . . . American enterprise had moved to the front, and the Castilian with his 'maromas' and 'bailes' and 'saints' days' and 'funcciones' had fallen to the rear; telephones and electric lights and Pullman cars had scared away the plodding burro and the creaking 'carreta'; it was even impossible to get a meal cooked in the Mexican style of Mexican viands; our dreams had faded . . . (Bourke, p. 450).

By the end of the 1890s Tucson had essentially completed its transformation from a Mexican/Indian village to an Anglo town. The population, decreased by the depression, was again on the upswing, and Anglos were becoming a majority for the first time.

Tucson continued to progress after the turn of the century—new, large hotels and commercial buildings were constructed, electric street cars began operating, streets were graded and lit with electric ligbts. The era of territorial Tucson was about to end. In 1912 Arizonans celebrated their admission as the 48th State. The 1920 census revealed Tucson as second in population to Phoenix (Chronology, pp. 9-2). The city had continued to grow, its prosperity proceeding from the surrounding ranches and irrigated farmlands, the presence of the University, and tourists and health seekers drawn by the attractions of Indian handicrafts and ruins, clear skies, and warm temperatures. The city now has a population of over 300,000 covering 96.5 square miles, and only a few vestiges of her presidio and territorial days remain (Arizona Yearbook, 1979-1980).

Tucson's efforts at preserving her Indian, Spanish, Mexican, and Anglo-Territorial heritage have met with varying degrees of success. As early as 1902, this attitude was common:

> Just as sometimes in the large cities a tract of ground, barren, repelling, covered with hovels and surrounded by squalor, is taken for public use, and in an incredibly short time the houses are removed, the streets broadened, graded and paved, and . . . the land itself turned into a park or boulevard of entrancing beauty . . .

> so Tucson in the last few years has been physically re-created and beautified. Adobe houses have been pulled down to give place to substantial brick buildings. Crooked streets have been made straight and narrow ones--no matter what the expense--widened. Elegant residences have been built; trees have been planted and have grown in countless numbers, and private lawns and public parks refresh the eye. (Ford).

Most of the early commercial area has vanished, demolished in the name of progress and development. Urban renewal in the 1960s caused a controversy over preservation of some of the city's oldest adobes located where the art center block was to be constructed. Some of these problems have been solved by incorporating the historic structures into the modern design. Other structures have simply been torn down. Yet urban renewal cannot be considered the sole culprit:

> Tucson's record for the preservation of significant historic landmarks and the making of historic sites is not good. This is not a reflection upon contemporary civic judgment; as pointed out earlier, the first tidal wave of Anglo culture in the 1870s began the obliteration of the past. It has simply been continued by succeeding generations for want of a more imaginative program. In 1885, practically the only reminders of the pioneer period still to be seen were the crumbling walls of San Agustín, portions of the city wall, and the headquarters of the original Spanish presidio, then incorporated into a modern dwelling. These, of course, are gone today. A pitifully small number of important landmarks were afterward preserved: and St. Augustine church, the Orndorff Hotel, the Territorial Capitol, and nearly all the charming family homes of prominent territorial citizens are gone, sacrificed to questionable and shortsighted programs of economic progress and municipal improvement. (Brandes, p. 28).

Fortunately attitudes toward historicity are constantly changing. The preservation of the Barrio Libre is an example of changing historical focus. An area virtually ignored by the city throughout its history, the Barrio has only since the 1970s been recognized as the last remnant of Tucson's earliest residential dwellings, deserving of efforts made to preserve and document the neighborhood.

The Tucson Barrio Association is a non-profit organization having as its goals the development of programs to assist Barrio residents and property owners to maintain and rehabilitate existing structures, to encourage new construction on vacant lots, to reverse the de-population trend, and to increase the economic base through skills workshops and creation of new jobs.

PART III. HISTORY OF THE BARRIO LIBRE

The Barrio Libre is, and was, a term for the residential area south of Tucson's central business district. The historic boundaries were never strictly defined; the area covered by the barrio increased and decreased over time. Translated, "barrio libre" means "free district," an area where people lived without intrusions by police or city officials. In recent times, the term "Barrio Libre" has come to be associated with crime, sub-standard housing, and other undesirable characteristics. Because of these connotations the area was titled "Barrio Histórico" when it became an official City of Tucson historic district. The name Barrio Libre is still used, however, by Tucsonans.

Being primarily a working-class Hispanic neighborhood, the area was virtually ignored during the years of its early settlement by the prominent townspeople, city officials, newspapers, and historians. The earliest city street maps do not picture the Barrio area, nor do early city property records describe it (Fergusson Map and Oury Property Record Book). One of the earliest descriptions of the Barrio comes from the 1881 Tucson City Directory which contains a section on "El Barrio Libre":

> This designation was given by the Mexican residents to that quarter of the city lying along Meyer and adjacent streets, southward of the business portion of the city, occupied by the Americans. It means Free Zone, and in earlier times was allowed to remain without legal restraints or the presence of a policeman. Here the Mescalian could imbibe his fill, and either male or female could, in peaceful intoxication, sleep on the sidewalk or in the middle of the streets, with all their ancient rights respected. Fandangoes, monte, chicken fights, broils, and all the amusements of the lower class of Mexicans, were, in this quarter, indulged in without restraint; and to this day much of the old-time regime prevails, although the encroachments of the American element indicate the ultimate doom of the customs in the Barrio Libre. It must be understood that these remarks apply only to the lower class of Mexicans and not to the cultured Mexican residents of the city, who for intelligence and enterprise, are foremost amoung our people.

The earliest Tucson map encompassing the Barrio Libre area is S. W. Foreman's 1872 townsite survey map. Tucson's first Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map (1883) shows only three full blocks of the present Barrio Histórico district, and the 1901 Sanborn map pictures only four full and two partial blocks of the twelve-block area. Even though early maps do not include this area, the non-uniform size of the blocks in Foreman's 1872 survey map presumes that the blocks were surveyed around pre-existing structures. An 1880 photograph taken from Sentinal Peak, west of town, shows a number of unplastered adobe buildings extending down to 17th Street. Cushing, Simpson, Kennedy, Meyer, and Convent streets can be distinguished, although the streets become mere tracks and the buildings are sparse toward the 17th Street end. By 1909 the entire twelve-block area of the Barrio Histórico appears on the Sanborn map, showing most of the structures that exist today in the district.

PART IV. ASSOCIATED FEATURES OF THE BARRIO LIBRE

The Tucson Barrio Histórico historic district incorporates not only the twelve blocks lying between Main and Stone avenues and Cushing and 18th streets, but also a portion of the El Hoyo barrio lying to the west, across Main Avenue. For about thirty-five years--from the 1880s to 1920--a large amusement park covered this area. The park was known as Carrillo Gardens until 1906, and contained a dance pavilion, baseball fields, a zoo, picnic grounds, an opera house, a lake, gardens, and concessions. The Tucson Amusement Company purchased the park in 1906, renamed it Elysian Grove, and operated it until 1920, when all of the structures were demolished, the lots subdivided, and parcels sold. This area of the city had an unusually high water table, allowing the creation of the large lake, and nourishing the tall trees, gardens, and lawns of the Grove. El Ojito Spring, a natural artesian well, was located nearby, as well as Simpson's Baths, a public bathhouse. The area naturally attracted many townspeople, and mule wagons and streetcars carried them to and from the 17th Street entrance of the Grove.

Also located near Elysian Grove and El Ojito Spring was the Wishing Shrine--a shrine dedicated to an unknown sinner who was supposedly buried where he was killed. Many legends surround the origin of the shrine, most of them having to do with a guilty lover who was murdered by a jealous husband. The story circulated that if a person lit a candle at the shrine and the candle remained lighted through the night, the wish would come true. The original Wishing Shrine lay to the southeast of its present location. In 1936 a local architect designed a new setting and the shrine was moved across Main Avenue to its present site. The Wishing Shrine (El Tiradito) was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1971.

Architectural types found in the Barrio cover a range of styles and periods. The earliest dwellings (pre-1880) are of the Traditional Sonoran style; flush-fronted, contiguous, flat-roofed row houses with recessed openings and metal canales draining the mud roofs. The arrival of the railroad in 1880 brought an increased supply of brick and timber building materials to the west and also introduced Anglo building elements and design standards into the neighborhood. Sonoran structures which were later modified to add an anglicized roof, porch, or other element, are called Transformed Sonoran, while structures built after 1880 and incorporating these elements are called Transitional Sonoran. Early Transitional Sonoran dwellings retain their flush-fronted, contiguous row house character, but may have a hipped or gabled roof, dormer vents or gablets, window transoms, a porch, etc. Late Transitional Sonoran buildings not only include these features, but also combine a new concept of site utilization. These free-standing, set-back dwellings have added the Anglo concept of front and side yards. Other styles found in the Barrio include a handful of Mission Revival dwellings with their sculptured parapets, some simple Spanish Colonial Revival structures, and several small structures with simplified, unelaborate Victorian detail. The purest examples of early adobe dwellings are located toward the south-central portion of the Barrio. The perimeters facing onto the main thoroughfares of Stone and Main avenues tend to be detached, brick and frame dwellings with Victorian detail. Most structures are adobe-bearing; there are a number of brick dwellings, a few brick-faced adobe structures, and a handful of stone buildings.

Roofs are sometimes wood-shingled, but are more often of rolled asphalt, composition shingles, or corrugated metal. Because of the flush-fronted character of the street facades, landscaping is generally found in the rear yards rather than along the streets. Vegetation is primarily shrubbery and oleanders with some mesquite, chinaberry, and citrus trees.

Although the Barrio was considered a residential area, corner grocery stores, butcher shops, bakeries, and small businesses proliferated in the neighborhood. Many of the dwellings combined business and residence quarters, where stores occupied the front of the building, facing onto the street, and living quarters were located in the rear. Barrio residents earned their livelihoods by tending small shops, or by working as laborers and in construction-type employment. The Southern Pacific Railroad Company was a big employer (Tucson City Directories).

Social composition of the Barrio until twenty years ago was probably over 80 percent Mexican-American. The majority of the residents are still Spanish-surnamed, but more Anglos have recently acquired property in the neighborhood. Around 1880, with the arrival of the railroad, large numbers of Chinese appeared in Tucson. The Chinese section of town was located north of the central business district, but Chinese grocery and general merchandise stores were common in the Barrio. The black population of the Barrio was historically very small, but has increased within the last twenty-five years.

Civic improvements came slowly to the Barrio. Mexican newspaper articles of the 1920s constantly complained of lack of proper street lighting, uneven streets, and unsafe conditions. The city paved the streets in 1938, and W. P. A. crews laid sidewalks during the 1930s. Housing conditions, on the other hand, have deteriorated in many cases. The large number of low-income rentals in the Barrio creates little incentive to maintain apartments or even to bring them up to the current building code. Many of these early adobe dwellings have always been rented by absentee landlords, and repairs and maintenance kept to a minimum.

A large urban renewal project undertaken in the late 1960s cleared out a large portion of what was considered "slums," and greatly recuded the area of the "Barrio Libre." Many of the city's earliest adobes were demolished and numbers of residents were displaced by the construction of the Community Center complex and parking lot.

The most recent threat to the existing Barrio came in 1971 when the route of the proposed Butterfield freeway would have cut a swathe through one-third of the neighborhood. The proposed freeway was the impetus for several actions--residents organized to prevent the freeway corridor; the Wishing Shrine (in the direct path of the freeway) was placed on the National Register of Historic Places; the University of Arizona College of Architecture published an architectural study of the neighborhood, analyzing the physical and social effects of the proposed freeway on the Barrio; and finally, the Barrio Historico historic district was created. The city's historic district ordinance provides an 180-day demolition delay, and requires permits for new construction and alterations within the district. The Barrio Libre Historic District was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978.

PART V. BARRIO LIBRE: CONVENT, MEYER, KENNEDY, 17TH STREET BLOCK

The buildings on the block bounded by S. Convent and S. Meyer avenues and W. Kennedy and W. 17th streets, and the buildings facing this block, are representative of the types of architecture found throughout the twelve-block Barrio Libre area. The Sonoran style predominates, with its flush-fronted, contiguous adobes having recessed apertures and few or no decorative details. Transitional and Transformed Sonoran adobes are more commonly found than the early Sonoran structures. Building dates range from several pre-1880 houses to a row of apartments built in 1929. Most of the buildings were constructed after 1880 and incorporated Anglo elements of hipped or gable roofs, front porches, and dormer vents. Many of the originally flat-roofed structures have replaced their mud roofs with corrugated metal and rolled asphalt gabled and hipped coverings.

The structures on the central block are, with the exception of one row of brick apartments, all constructed of adobe. On the blocks facing it, there is one brick edifice (70 W. 17th St.) and a stone duplex (147 W. Kennedy St.). Three structures have been modified so that the original adobe facades are no longer visible. Two of these are grocery stores--The Jerry Lee Ho Market was remodeled in the 1940s to give it a modern stucco- and tile-fronted commercial appearance, and Lucky's Market had a decorative brick facade added in the 1930s and 1940s. The Valencia House, on the corner of S. Convent Avenue and W. Kennedy Street, was completely encased in brick about or shortly after 1905. The brick apartments to the south of it were built at the same time. The remaining structures all present a plastered adobe appearance, except the residence at 510-512 S. Convent Avenue, which is of exposed adobe.

Buildings are in various states of upkeep and maintenance. Several of the structures have undergone extensive rehabilitation and are showplaces both inside and out. Other property owners have not had the means to renovate their dwellings, or even to add some of the basic modern conveniences. A few buildings have remained abandoned and neglected for a number of years. The number of apartment buildings owned by absentee landlords does not encourage major repairs or extensive rehabilitation of these buildings.

The proportion of owner-residents to absentee landlords is about evenly divided. From a primarily Mexican-American area, ownership has transferred into several Anglo hands within the past 10 or 20 years. The two Chinese property owners both operate grocery stores on S. Meyer Avenue.

Six commercial enterprises currently operate on this block of the Barrio--the two grocery stores at either end of the west side of Meyer, a pottery shop at 489 Meyer, The Wherehouse (an antique shop) at 551-557 Meyer, a Handicapped service organization at 509-513 Meyer, and an advertising agency at 496-498 Convent. A church at the corner of 17th and Convent which housed three different black congregations from 1912 to 1967 has since been converted to an artist's studio and residence.

Dating structures in this section of the Barrio is a difficult task. The Sanborn Fire Insurance maps do not include this area until 1909. There are no city maps, records, or building permits prior to about 1920. The street numbering system changed several times before 1900. The result has been that construction dates, builders, and occupancy during the nineteenth century are nearly impossible to determine. Property titles were sometimes recorded years after the transaction took place, so that even dating structures from the title chains can be misleading. There are few early photographs of this section of town, but an 1880 bird's-eye view taken from nearby Sentinel Peak shows the city of Tucson, including some of the present structures on this block. Possible pre-1880 structures are 614 S. Meyer, the rear section of 575-585 S. Meyer, 150 W. Kennedy, and 510-512 S. Convent. Other buildings that may pre-date 1880 are 486-518 S. Meyer, 555-557 S. Meyer, 609 S. Meyer, and 451-473 S. Convent. Because the images on the old bird's-eye view photograph are so miniscule, and the angle of the view makes it difficult to distinguish the north-south streets, this also is a very inaccurate method of dating to use for any of the structures.

The original owners of property on these blocks, as shown starting with the 1872 survey and recording of deeds, were generally Anglos or more affluent Mexicans. These property owners either owned large ranches outside of town or ran prosperous businesses in the downtown area. As the city began to grow after the arrival of the railroad in 1880, the lots in this section of town were sold at little cost to Mexican laborers and Southern Pacific employees. Most of the new property owners built their own houses. In many cases, the family made their own adobe bricks. An architect may have been employed for the design of the church building and Valencia's brick house and apartments, but most of the buildings were constructed by friends and family from a chalk outline laid out on the ground. Several carpenters, plasterers, and construction employees lived in the neighborhood, and probably assisted in various stages of construction of many of the houses. Francisco Valenzuela, Antonio López, Juan Pascale, and Andres Herreras were all employed in construction trades and probably did a great deal of their work in the Barrio. A well-known carpenter, Manuel "Maestro" Flores, built 505 S. Meyer, and may have been partially responsible for 571 S. Meyer and the brick house and apartments on Convent Avenue. Flores and his brother, Ramon, were highly respected craftsmen in Tucson between 1900 and 1910.

Property ownership tended to stay within the family, passing from parents to children. Women's names are found in the title chains as often as are men's names. Some properties are still occupied by the family of the original owner and builder (521-525 S. Meyer). In the early 1900s families would remain in the same neighborhood after marriage, so that nearly everyone on a given street could be related by ties of blood or marriage. On Convent Avenue this can be seen through the intermarriage of the Ahloy and Escalante families, and the kinship ties among the Martínez-Bojórquez-Zubiate-Tapia-García families. On Kennedy Street, marriages linked the Rubios and Valencias, and the Aros and Terrazas families. On Meyer Avenue the Bernals and Herreras intermarried. There were undoubtedly many more such ties.

Since 1960, property ownership has passed increasingly out of the family as older members have died and younger members have moved away. Much of the property in this section of the Barrio has been purchased by H. Kelly Rollings, a Tucson auto dealer, who has rehabilitated several of the buildings, and continued to rent at low cost to long-term tenants.

The Robles family also possesses several pieces of property on these blocks. Bernabé Robles acquired quite a bit of real estate in the 1920s and 1930s by lending money and foreclosing on property for inability to pay. Since most of the Barrio residents were working-class laborers, tax sales and foreclosures on mortgages were not uncommon.

The appearance of most of the structures has not altered a great deal since 1930. The interior of the block has probably changed most as many of the outbuildings have disappeared along with the need for stables, corrals, hay barns, and space for wagons and equipment. Fences have been built closer to the houses leaving the interior of the block open for use as a play area for children. Many structures have fallen down or been demolished—a pawnshop built in 1872 at the southeast corner of W. Kennedy and S. Convent became a Chinese and later a Mexican grocery before collapsing in the 1940s or 1950s. Structures on the north side of 17th Street have all been demolished--a grocery store and the residence of Leonides Montaño on the corner of Convent Avenue, an adobe dwelling and two stone outbuildings next door, and the residence of Damian Valenzuela, a teamster, on the corner of Meyer Avenue. Several tenements and the Goodyear Shoe Repair shop were located between 557 and 571 S. Meyer. The Herreras residence and a row of apartments on S. Meyer were torn down in the 1950s to create a parking lot for the Jerry Lee Ho Market.

Increasing awareness of the area's historic value, and restrictions on demolition and new construction in the historic district, will help preserve the face of the Barrio for years to come.

#

PART VI. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Early Maps:

Fergusson Map, 1862. (Tucson street map.) Arizona Historical Society, University of Arizona Library.

Foreman Map, 1872. (First survey map of Tucson). Arizona Historical Society, University of Arizona Library.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Tucson, 1883, 1886, 1901 (corrected to 1904), 1909 (corrected to 1914), 1919, 1948. Arizona Historical Society, University of Arizona Library.

B. Bibliography:

1. Primary sources:

Cosulich, Bernice. Papers, 1937-1947. Cosulich Collection, Arizona Historical Society.

Historic Preservation Consultants. A Report on the Historic Architecture to be Preserved as Part of the Pueblo Center Redevelopment Project, City of Tucson, Pima County, Arizona. March 18, 1969.

Oury, William S. Property Record Book, 1862-1864. Arizona Historical Society.

Perkins, Mrs. C. B. "The Story of the 'Wishing Shrine.'" Narrative and poem. University of Arizona Library, Special Collections. Poem dated February 10, 1926.

Power, Veronica. Some Pbases of Tucson, 1880-1881. University of Arizona Library, Special Collections. Received October 6, 1925.

Tucson City Directories (title and publisher vary), 1881-1979. Arizona Historical Society, University of Arizona Special Colls.

[Tucson Information Notebook](untitled). A collection of data about Tucson. Arizona Historical Society.

Wheeler, Charles C. Places of Amusement in the Old Pueblo of Tucson of Past Years. Wheeler Collection, Arizona Historical Society.

2. Secondary sources:

Anderson, Adrienne Barbara. "From Family Home to Slum Apartment: Archeological Analysis Within the Urban Renewal Area, Tucson, Arizona." Master's thesis, University of Arizona, 1970.

Bartlett, John Russell. Personal Narrative of Explorations and Incidents in Texas, New Mexico, California, Sonora, and Chihuahua, Connected With the United States and Mexican Boundary Commission, During the Years 1850, '51, '52, and '53. D. Appleton & Co., New York, 1854.

Bourke, John Gregory. On the Border With Crook. Rio Grande Press, Chicago, Illinois, 1962.

Brandes, Ray. "Guide to the Historic Landmarks of Tucson." Arizoniana: The Journal of Arizona History, Vol. III, No. 2 (Summer, 1962), pp. 27-40.

Buehman, Estelle M. Old Tucson: a Hop, Skip and Jump History From 1539 Indian Settlement to a New and Greater Tucson. State Consolidated Publishing Co., Tucson, Arizona, 1911.

Byars, Charles. "Documents of Arizona History: the First Map of Tucson." The Journal of Arizona History, Vol. Vol. VIII, No. 4 (Winter, 1966), pp. 188-195.

Citizen's Advisory Public Information Subcommittee. Urban Renewal: a Teamwork of Private Enterprise and Government for Slum Clearance and Redevelopment . . . of the Old Pueblo District. City of Tucson, Arizona, September 18, 1961.

Cooper, James F. The First Hundred Years: the History of Tucson School District 1, Tucson, Arizona, 1867-1967. John D. Fahr, editor (n.d.).

Cosulich, Bernice. Tucson. Arizona Silhouettes, Tucson, Arizona, 1953.

Deitch, Lewis Ian. "Changing House Types in Tucson." Master's thesis, University of Arizona, 1966.

Dobyns, Henry F. Spanish Colonial Tucson: a Demographic History. The University of Arizona Press, Tucson, Arizona, 1976.

Finney, Frederic N. Tucson Gas, Electric Light and Power Company. Pamphlet, no publisher or date of publication.

Ford, Rochester. "Tucson, Arizona." Out West, Vol. XVII, No. 3 (September 1902).

Greenleaf, Cameron and Andrew Wallace. "Tucson: Pueblo, Presidio, and American City, a Synopsis of Its History." Arizoniana: The Journal of Arizona History, Vol. III, No. 2 (Summer 1962) pp. 19-27.

Hamilton, Patrick. The Resources of Arizona. 3rd edition. A. L. Bancroft and Co., Printers, San Francisco, 1884.

Historical Records Survey. Inventory of the County Archives of Arizona. No. 10, Pima County (Tucson). The Historical Records Survey, Division of Women's and Professional Projects, Works Progress Administration, July 1938.

Hodge, Hiram C. 1877 Arizona as It Was. The Rio Grande Press Inc., Chicago, 1877.

Hughes, L. C. "Growth and History of Tucson." The Call of the Desert, Vol. I, No. 3, (June 1, 1908), pp. 3-4, 37-38.

Jaynes, Allan B. "Like a Mirage Miracle: a Study of the Development of Tucson, Arizona." Sunset, Vol. XIII, No. 1 (May 1904), pp. 68-77.

Junior League of Tucson. About and Roundabout Tucson. Junior League of Tucson, Tucson, Arizona, 1936.

Lockwood, Frank C. Life in Old Tucson 1854-1864: As Remembered by the Little Maid Atanacia Santa Cruz. Tucson Civic Committee, The Ward Ritchie Press, Los Angeles, 1943.

Lockwood, Dean Frank C. and Captain Donald W. Page. Tucson--the Old Pueblo. Printed by the Manufacturing Stationers, Inc., Phoenix, Arizona, 1943.

Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph Company. Tucson. Printed at Tucson, Arizona, by the Mountain States Telephone & Telegraph Co., 1949.

Officer, James. "Historical Pactors in Interethnic Relations in the Community of Tucson." Arizona, Vol. I, No. 3 (Fall, 1960), pp. 12-16.

Pederson, Gilbert J. "The Townsite Is Now Secure: Tucson Incorporates, 1871." The Journal of Arizona History, Vol. XI, No. 3 (Autumn, 1970), pp. 151-174.

Purcell, Margaret Kathleen. "Life and Leisure in Tucson Before 1880." Master's thesis, University of Arizona, 1969.

Saarinen, Thomas, Lay James Gibson, et al. "Territorial Tucson," manuscript in preparation, University of Arizona, Geography Department, Tucson, Arizona.

Spicer, John. Cycles of Conquest: The Impact of Spain, Mexico, and the United States on the Indians of the Southwest, 1533-1960. The University of Arizona Press, Tucson, Arizona, 1962.

Spring, John. John Spring's Arizona, edited by A. M. Gustafson. University of Arizona Press, Tucson, Arizona, 1966.

Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission. Tucson, the Old Pueblo: a Chronology. Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission, 1971, revised and updated 1977.

Wilson, Gen. T. Frew. "Tucson, Past and Present." The Call of the Desert, Vol. I, No. 3 (June 1, 1908), pp. 7-8, 31-33.

Yates, Richard and Charity, editors. The 1979-80 Arizona Yearbook: a Guide to Government in Arizona. Arizona Information Press, Yuma, Arizona, 1979.

Newspapers: (on microfilm at Arizona Historical Society and University of Arizona Library.

Arizona Daily Star, 1879-1980

El Fronterizo, 1926-1929

El Mosquito, 1919-1920, 1925

Tucson Daily Citizen, 1879

El Tucsonense, 1915-1957

C. Oral Histories:

Barnhart, Josephine, 78 W. Kennedy St. Has lived in the Barrio Libre since the late 1930s.

Cota, Evangelina Sánchez, 521-525 S. Meyer Ave. Granddaughter of Feliciano Finbres who built 509-513 and 521-525 S. Meyer Ave.

Fimbres, Felix, 462 E. 31st St. Son of Feliciano Fimbres who built 509-513 and 521-525 S. Meyer Ave.

Flores, Adelina García, 56 W. Kennedy St. Daughter of Pedro Garcia who built 496-498 S. Convent Ave.

Gee, Suey and Lillian, 600 S. Meyer Ave. Lillian Gee is the great-granddaughter of the man who started Jerry Lee Ho market. They are the present owners.

Herreras, Eliazar, 1331 E. Waverly. Was an early Tucson architect and building inspector. His family owned property at S. Meyer Avenue and W. 17th Streets. He was born at 575 S. Meyer Ave.

Lightfoot, Jon, 70 W. 17th St. Present owner of Prince Chapel African Methodist-Episcopal Church.

Montes, Arnold, 74 W. Kennedy St. Lived at this address as a child. Now lives in Los Angeles, California.

Preston, Norman (Phone conversation). Early member of the Prince Chapel African Methodist-Episcopal Church.

Rivera, Frank, 479 S. Convent Ave. Resided at 440-446 S. Convent Avenue during 1920s. Purchased 473-481 S. Convent in 1939.

Sweet, Larry, 551-557 S. Meyer Ave. Purchased this structure in 1976 and operates an antiques and collectibles business there.

Trejo, María Luisa, 624 N. 7th Ave. Resided at 492-494 S. Convent Avenue during 1940s and 1950s.

Urías, Alberto, 706 S. Osborne. Has lived most of his life in Barrio Libre area.

PART VII. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) of the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service's National Architectural and Engineering Record (NAER) in cooperation with the Tucson Barrio Association, Inc. Funds for the project were provided by the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office and the Arizona State Office of Economic Planning and Development. Under the direction of Robert J. Kapsch, Chief of NAER, John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS, and Kenneth L. Anderson, Principal Architect, the project was completed during the summer of 1980 at the HABS field office in Tucson, Arizona, by Robert C. Giebner, Project Supervisor (Professor of Architecture, University of Arizona); William Joseph Graham, Project Foreman (University of Maryland); Ann E. Huston, Project Historian (California State University, Sacramento); Maureen L. Gerhold, Assistant Historian (Pennsylvania State University); Student Architects Scott Marshall Dolph (University of Arizona); Carol Jean Lemon (Washington State University); and Harrison Adam Sutphin (Virginia Tech); and Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) Summer Youth Employment Program Interns: Maria Ariola (Tucson High School); Ernest Cota; Lupita Lopez (Tucson High School); and Anna Trinidad. Photographic records were made for HABS by David J. Kaminsky, Photographer, Roswell, New Mexico. Editing and final preparation of the documentation was carried out in 1981 in the HABS Washington Office by William Joseph Graham, Architect, and Lucy Pope Wheeler, Writer/Editor, of the HABS professional staff.

#